

A SURVEY OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN GRADES THREE, SIX,
AND NINE IN THE MASON CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM CONCERNING
VARIOUS ASPECTS OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

A Field Report
Presented to
The Graduate Division
Drake University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
Phyllis Mae Oetken
August 1968

1968
Oct 6

A SURVEY OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN GRADES THREE, SIX,
AND NINE IN THE MASON CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM CONCERNING
VARIOUS ASPECTS OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

by

Phyllis Mae Oetken

Approved by Committee:

Hazel Weakly
Chairman

Carl C. Zehr

Edith L. Canfield
Dean of the Graduate Division

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1600-9

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Importance of the Study	3
Procedure	5
Limitations of the Study	6
Definition of Terms Used	7
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
The Schools' Position Concerning Sex Education	9
Parental Considerations in a Sex Education Program	18
Theories and Approaches to Sex Education .	21
Sex Education in the Elementary School . .	26
Sex Education in the Curriculum	32
Sex Education Programs in Existence in Elementary Schools	35
III. PROCEDURES USED	44
The Questionnaire	44
The School Survey	45
The Returned Questionnaire	46
Assimilation of the Data	46
Procedures of Reporting the Study	46

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA	47
Family Information	47
Family Life Education	48
Sex Education	51
Parental Comments	57
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . .	60
Summary	60
Conclusions	62
Recommendation	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY	64
APPENDIX	68

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Selected Parental Opinion Concerning the Importance of Various Phases of Family Life Education in Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	49
II. Selected Parental Opinion Concerning the Harmfulness of Community Recreational Resources Toward the Development of Social Attitudes in Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	50
III. Selected Parental Opinion Concerning Whether Schools Should Help in Sex Education Instruction, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	51
IV. Selected Parental Opinion Concerning Their Adequacy in Providing Sex Education for Their Children, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	52
V. Selected Parental Opinion Concerning Grade Placement of Four Aspects of Sex Education, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	53
VI. Selected Parental Opinion Toward Observing Resources of a Sex Education Program in Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	54
VII. Selected Parental Opinion Toward Observing Additional Resources of a Sex Education Program, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	55
VIII. Selected Parental Opinion Toward Satisfaction With the Family Life Education Program, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	56
IX. Selected Parental Consideration of Enrolling in an Adult Education Class Concerning Sex Education, Mason City, Iowa, May, 1968	56

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

The curriculum of the nation's schools can be described as a reflector of the society. Hence in our constantly and rapidly changing society, the curriculum must be revised and improved with new knowledge inserted. The schools, in general, have attempted to survey the need for change rather closely and have allied with the other institutions of the nation in an attempt to provide adequate education for the masses.

The needs of our society have called for curriculum revamping in the content areas such as mathematics, science, and social studies. Evaluation has shown that the emphasis in curricular changes in these areas is helping the students of the schools to better adapt to the society in which they live.

Academic achievement is not the only part of the school program under surveillance by our educators. The "whole child" concept has permeated the thinking of many leading authorities in educational psychology, in the past two to three decades. Research has shown that teaching methods which foster total growth and development of the student serve him with a more adequate background to achieve a rich and rewarding life.

The broad term of "Family Life Education" has been used by many authorities to describe the objectives, concepts, and methods that help promote the total development of the student. Some of the specific areas which are included in a program of Family Life Education are as follows: (1) student counseling; (2) tobacco and alcohol education; (3) information concerning narcotics; (4) sex education; (5) preparation for marriage; and (6) parent-child relationships.

The need for sex education in the schools has been prompted by the massiveness and complexity of the changing society. Many parents, through community organizations, have sought aid in helping them to give sound information in matters related to sex. The problems involved are many and varied due to the fact that each community is unique in its own particular needs.

It was in this setting of Family Life Education that philosophy, objectives, and parental opinions in regard to approval, necessity, and adequacy of a newly initiated program were considered.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was the purpose of this study (1) to review literature in the field of sex education which outlined the current thinking and obligations of the schools; (2)

to determine some of the opinions held by parents in Mason City, Iowa, concerning Family Life Education in the public school curriculum; (3) to assimilate the data gathered in the survey to help determine further needs of Family Life Education in this community.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Johnson and Schutt have set the stage for this study by stating:¹

Today, overwhelming problems of disease, mental illness, population, child neglect, illegitimacy, abortion, delinquency, illiteracy, and so on, are forcing the issue. Sex is becoming subject matter whether those in the educational establishment want it or not.

Who is responsible for the instruction of youth in the broad areas of sex education? Wetherill, San Diego, California, found that parents considered themselves primal in this area of responsibility.² Although it was felt that the church should have a role in sex education, the consensus of parents was that they considered schools to have the second most responsibility.

¹Warren R. Johnson and Margaret Schutt, "Sex Education Attitudes of School Administrators and School Board Members," The Journal of School Health, XXXVI (February, 1966), 65.

²Gloyd G. Wetherill, "Accepting Responsibility for Sex Education," The Journal of School Health, XXX (March, 1960), 109.

Wetherill concluded that, "They not only felt the schools were next, but they had a real responsibility in this area of education and should be doing something about it."¹

In many cases, citizens favor the participation of the schools in the area of sex education, but for some reason the schools are often reluctant or slow to establish a program.² One agree-disagree item on a questionnaire developed by Johnson, and completed by school administrators and school board members in the state of Maryland, was: "Sex education is a 'frill' which probably should not usurp time from more important courses." One person responded in this way: "What is more important than Life?"³

According to Holzman,⁴ "Sex Education is Here to Stay," the fact is pointed out that sex education is fast becoming as much a part of today's public and private school curriculum as English, science, and social studies. It is no longer something far off in the future. It is here and now.

¹Ibid.

²Johnson, op. cit., p. 64.

³Johnson, op. cit., p. 67.

⁴Seymour Holzman, "Sex Education is Here to Stay," The Scholastic Teacher, (February, 1968), 4.

Further impetus was given to the importance of the study when recently the Iowa Board of Public Instruction expressed a desire for sex education programs in Iowa schools, providing "honest, factual answers" to students' questions. The board urged that such programs be instituted in elementary and secondary schools, integrated into selected courses already offered. The Department of Public Instruction is now preparing a sex and family problems course to encourage schools to enter the field.

In addition, the Mason City School Administrators felt it would be helpful to find what opinions are held by parents, and whether there is a reluctance or acceptance to the initial Family Life Program instigated this year. The information contained in the review of literature and opinion survey should be an aid to any further curriculum planning in a Family Life Education program for the Mason City Schools.

III. PROCEDURE

A self-constructed questionnaire was designed to measure parental opinion on Family Life Education using information from selected readings. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: (1) Family Information; (2) Family Life Education; and (3) Sex Education.

These sections contained from two to seven questions, with space for additional comments from parents. The questionnaire was approved by Professors Hazel Weakly and Carl Fehrle, Drake University, and validated in their classes.

Five schools were involved in the study; four elementary and one junior high. The Lincoln, Grant, Wilson, Jefferson Elementary Schools, and the Monroe Junior High School were thought to represent a cross section of the Mason City School population. A list of parents was obtained from school principals and an eighteen per cent random sampling was used.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were two basic limitations of the study, (1) only eighteen per cent of the total number of parents of children in grades three, six, and nine in the selected schools were asked to participate in the study. Using the total number of parents would have been too unwieldy a group for tabulation; and (2) of the ninety-eight questionnaires sent sixty-seven families responded, constituting a 68.2 per cent return. The lack of community response was considered a limiting factor of the study.

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Family Life Education. The term Family Life Education, as used in this field report, describes content, courses, and services related to the promotion of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary in helping students achieve a rewarding future life. Included within this broad scope are (1) counseling services; (2) sex education; (3) alcohol and tobacco education; (4) narcotics education; (5) boy-girl relationships; and (6) marriage and the family. The various facets of Family Life Education are integrated into the curriculum rather than isolated in certain areas.

Family Life Education Program. A program in Family Life Education describes a systematic approach with definite curriculum planning involved. Community planning, administration and teacher involvement, curriculum handbooks, available aids and materials, and specified methodology are all considered within the framework.

Sex education. Sex education, as used in this field report, is considered a facet of Family Life Education. Sex education refers to the area of the curriculum designed to develop knowledge, understandings, and attitudes toward sex and its various manifestations.

Sex education program. A program in sex education refers to a curriculum structure designed to carry out the objectives and goals inherent in sex education.

Sex instruction. Sex instruction refers more specifically to the actual teaching procedures involved in sex education.

Reproductive education. Reproductive education refers to that facet of sex education pertaining to human reproduction. The goals of reproductive education are centered around the development of background and knowledge concerning conception, fertilization, pre-natal development, and birth of animal species.

Integrated curriculum. The integrated curriculum approach to sex education is a method of subject matter insertion. The various areas of sex education are inserted into the existing curriculum with consideration given to child developmental stages, the need inherent for the age level, and the maturity involved. As envisioned by its advocates, the integrated approach would distribute sex education concepts throughout the curriculum rather than isolate the instruction in one area.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature that was reviewed gave pertinent data in the following general areas: (1) The School's Position Concerning Sex Education; (2) Parental Considerations in a Sex Education Program; (3) Theories and Approaches to Sex Education; (4) Sex Education in the Elementary School; (5) Sex Education in the Curriculum; and (6) Sex Education Programs in Existence in Elementary Schools.

I. THE SCHOOL'S POSITION CONCERNING SEX EDUCATION

Manley reported that three important educational bodies had taken a stand concerning action the schools should take.¹ She cited the following:

For many years there has been an awareness of the need for this kind of education in our schools. In 1941 the American Association of School Administrators recommended that sex education be included in the curriculum. In 1948 the National Conference on Education of Teachers recommended sex education as part of the curriculum for all teachers. In 1960 the White House Conference on Children and Youth recommended that "Family Life Courses" including preparation for marriage and parenthood,

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education; Where, When, and How Should it be Taught?" Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, XXXV (March, 1964), 24.

be instituted as an integral and major part of public education from elementary school through high school.¹

Family Life Education was described as the natural and logical setting for sex education in the schools by Barick and Staedefalke. They conceived Family Life Education as going beyond the traditional bounds of sex education by focusing upon the interpersonal relationships within the family structure. This approach emphasized the positive goals of successful marriage and family stability. Within this broad framework, sex education was a needed and important element.²

Several of the sources reviewed pointed out that the home, community, church, and schools all should assume the responsibility for providing sex education for the youth. Some of the aspects of this approach are considered here.

Stone, after citing the need for giving help to youth in sex education, described the home as the natural place for such instruction. However, due to the complexity of life, "The home appears to be losing some of its influence."³ Even if the problem was handled at

¹Ibid.

²Lawrence G. Barick and Karl G. Staedefalke, "Sex Education," Review of Educational Research, XXVI (December, 1956), 546.

³Donald B. Stone, "A Basic Philosophy of Sex Education," The Journal of School Health, XXVII (June, 1958), 237.

home, sex education presupposed maturity and knowledge on the parents' part, and their own sex adjustment.¹

Another aspect of the problem with parents as the only source of sex education was pointed out by Kirkendall. Parents see the child as an individual whereas the school sees him in his total adjustment.

The school sees him as he associates with and adjusts to other children. The family should have close emotional ties, a confidential relationship with the child, and a genuine concern for his well-being. But these very attributes many times² turn out to be a stumbling block in sex education.

The church, as a prime source for sex education, is limited in several areas, according to Stone. The fact that all children do not attend church because of parents' non-affiliation was considered a limiting factor. The church traditionally does not attempt to initiate policies and instruction in the more controversial issues. Another limiting factor was the lack of trained personnel to handle the complex material and methods needed in an adequate sex education program.³

¹Ibid.

²Lester A. Kirkendall, Sex Education as Human Relations (New York: Iner Publishing Company, Inc., 1950), p. 125.

³Stone, loc. cit.

He continued:

After reviewing the facts, would it not appear logical to assume that the school should be given the major responsibility for sex education since the school has the opportunity to reach all children?¹

The school, because of the fact that it comes in contact with nearly all of the students, was emphasized as an important link in sex instruction by Manley. The school's responsibility should not be limited to teaching just the three R's but must develop individuals who can assume responsibilities of living in this world.

The school is the only institution which receives all the children over a prolonged period. It has personnel who are educated to teach, who understand children, who can approach hard problems objectively, and who can keep knowledgeable on the new materials and discoveries.²

Kirkendall reported that the school must occupy a key role in an adequate program of sex education; he also emphasized that the school comes in close contact with the student for a prolonged period of time. In the same vein he stated that, "Teachers, while generally not well trained to give sex education, are potentially more educable than the staff of any other agency or institution."³

¹Ibid., p. 238.

²Helen Manley, "Sex Education in the Schools," School and Community, L (February, 1964), 22.

³Kirkendall, loc. cit.

Manley clearly defined the school as the institution which should take the initiative in the matter of sex education. The schools should not hide behind the "alibis" of not enough time in the curriculum or that the responsibility belongs to the home. The schools' responsibility must manifest itself in clarifying and coordinating the child's learnings in sex, and help him make accurate choices between competing moral codes. "The schools have not met this immediate need of youth to live in today's world, equipped with sex knowledge, attitudes, and standards for meeting each situation in which this rapid charged pace of living throws them."¹

Community leaders must look to the school as the first line of attack was the thought expressed by Gruenberg. Whatever society intended for the future must first be put in its schools.

As to the school's supplementing and giving aid to the home Gruenberg said:

The school needs to supplement the home in overcoming attitudes that may be embarrassing to children in their daily relationships and their future development. Such help may require individual counsel or² special school plans rather than new lessons.

¹Manley, loc. cit.

²Benjamin C. Gruenberg, "What is Being Done?" Education Digest, XX (May, 1955), 48-51.

The literature thus far reviewed has been concerned with the problems involved in sex education. Two institutions, the home and the church, were reported to have some limiting factors which caused deficiencies in this phase of education for the society's youth. The school was pinpointed by authorities as being one of the major contributors in this educational area.

The more ideal situation as described by some of the authorities is one in which the home, community resources, and school work cooperatively toward a common goal. Several aspects of this philosophy are worthy of mention.

In answer to certain critics who protested that sex education was the responsibility of the home alone, Kirkendall stated this:

Practically, home, school, church, and other community agencies should be jointly concerned in accomplishing this task. Their efforts should be supplementary rather than overlapping. But even duplication is helpful whenever it serves to reinforce important concepts, and to demonstrate that responsible individuals concerned with the welfare of youth are in relative agreement.¹

Manley suggested the community approach when she wrote, "All agencies which touch the lives of children and youth have an obligation to prepare them for their

¹Lester A. Kirkendall, Sex Education as Human Relation (New York: Inner Publishing Company, Inc., 1950), p. 125.

function as members of a family now and as potential husbands and wives later."¹

Stone concluded that sex education should be thought of as encompassing the responsibility of all. He stated;

. . . each supplementing and reinforcing the education of the individuals. To insure the most effective kind of program, each individual and group must make his unique contribution in harmony with others. Any program of sex education must be well planned by a cooperative effort on the part of the home, church, and community.²

The schools and other community agencies have been criticized by some of the authorities reviewed. Calderone stated that, "We do a uniformly poor job of sex education in our society."³ Sex education, as it was commonly introduced today was not sex education but reproductive education. Concepts such as what being a man or woman meant and moral and spiritual judgments were not emphasized enough. She continued:

We must give full information. Students are begging and pleading for this. How wickedly dishonest can we be in failing to provide it! At the same moment that the commissioner of health of a

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education: Where, When, and How Should it be Taught?" Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, XXXV (March, 1964), 22.

²Stone, loc. cit.

³Mary S. Calderone, "Adolescent Sexual Behavior: Whose Responsibility?" The PTA Magazine, LIX (September, 1964), 5.

great city bewails the mounting venereal disease rate among young people, public schools are refusing to give factual information on venereal disease . . . From first grade through senior high school, we must see to it that our youngsters have full, factual information in this field, appropriate to their ages, and that there are qualified adults to give it--which most of us are not.¹

Kilander answered school officials who regarded sex education as the home and the church's responsibility. Boys and girls are going to learn about reproductive and other matters related to sex from sources which are not as sound and reliable as information provided by the school. The kind of information which the child gleaned from the various sources could prove to be detrimental to the development of accurate knowledge and sound judgments.²

Three fears were described by Manley concerning the schools' lag in initiating programs in sex education. The first was that administrators are afraid of public response to a controversial issue. The second fear was the problem of inserting a program in the curriculum and the procedures involved in handling instruction. Lastly,

¹Ibid., p. 7.

²Frederick H. Kilander, Ph.D., "A Survey of the Public's Knowledge of Certain Aspects of Human Reproduction," The Journal of School Health, XXXIX (June, 1959), 211.

was the difficulty in finding qualified teachers to carry out the complex methods involved in a good program.¹

Suehsdorf's criticism dealt with the schools' policy of merely giving children the facts of life and not giving them a basis for a more complete understanding of proper sexual behavior. She stated:

What has been accomplished? Looking around us we are forced to admit that we still see neurotic behavior, still see abnormality, still see unhappy marriages among the very people who were presumably exposed in childhood to sounder and fuller information about sex than were their predecessors.²

She did not conclude that the schools were completely on the wrong footing nor should they revert to the old-fashioned ways of refusing to help youngsters with their search for information. She did conclude:

. . . it is more complex than we thought . . . merely giving children the facts of life, or even wholesome attitudes through words and explanations, has proved insufficient.³

Facts alone were considered an inadequate approach by Manley. "Facts do not arbitrarily motivate improved behavior. Boys and girls need the truth, the right

¹Manley, loc. cit.

²Adie Suehsdorf, "What Have We Learned About Sex Education?" Child Study, (Winter, 1954-1955), 2.

³Ibid.

answers, the factual knowledge to counteract the fantasies and half truths that fill their minds."¹

II. PARENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN A SEX EDUCATION PROGRAM

Some authorities reviewed revealed information concerning parental opinion about the schools' involvement in the programs of sex education. Three of the sources gave some statistics which were pertinent to the problem stated at the outset of this paper. Those writings are reported here.

Manley contributed statistics pointing out an indication that boys and girls receive information concerning sex from sources other than the home, school, or church:

Research indicates that seventy-two per cent of boys and girls receive their sex knowledge from other than parents, school, or church. Fifty-six per cent of these received the information between the sixth and ninth grades and eighteen per cent learned about it between grades one and five.²

Manley advocated school participation, stating that the school does not supplant the home but merely supplements it.³

Strain and Eggert reported on a poll of parents concerning the question, "What do you want the school to

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education in the Schools," School and Community, L (February, 1964), 27.

²Ibid., p. 13.

³Ibid.

do?" Ninety-three per cent indicated that they believed the schools should provide sex education for all. Two per cent said they avoided all sex questions at home. One per cent did not want sex education taught in the school.

In a poll taken in New Jersey it was discovered that four out of five adults were in favor of Family Life Education in the school curriculum.

Of the parents in Los Angeles responding to a questionnaire, ninety-seven per cent indicated approval of sex education in the senior high school, ninety-five per cent in the junior high school, and seventy-five per cent in the elementary school. "Actually, a well-planned program from the sociological point of view should start in kindergarten and continue through high school."¹

Manley reported on a Purdue poll of 1,000 teenagers as to the source of their information concerning sex. The poll revealed that thirty-two per cent of the girls and fifteen per cent of the boys were informed by the parents. Six per cent of all surveyed stated that they learned from courses in school whereas seven per

¹ Francis Bruce Strain and Chester Lee Eggert, Framework for Family Life Education (The American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 1956), pp. 38-44.

cent received information from older people other than their parents. Fifty-three per cent of the boys and forty-three per cent of the girls found needed information from friends and people of their own age. Fifteen per cent pieced together the information from other sources. Eighty-eight per cent of these young people said they wanted more information about sex.¹

Strain and Eggert felt there was no controversy in the home on the matter of schools initiating programs in Family Life Education. "Of the relatively few who object, some lose their objections when they know for what family life and sex education stand."²

They continued:

From that time to the present there has been a constant and continuing acceptance of sex education in the home, as every parent survey shows. Now, after a half a century, this mission of home teaching is assured. A wider, still partially explored, but rich and fertile country lies ahead. For this next step once far away and now close at hand, family life education in the schools-- public approval is also apparent in the surveys.³

The literature reviewed in this section was concerned with parents' and students' reaction to programs

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education: Where, When, and How Should it be Taught?" Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, XXXV (March, 1964), 21.

²Strain and Eggert, op. cit., p. 3.

³Ibid.

in sex education. Consensus of the authorities revealed a positive attitude by both the parents and the students involved.

III. THEORIES AND APPROACHES TO SEX EDUCATION

Background in theory and approaches in regard to sex education was the topic of two authorities. Maw suggested seven basic philosophies concerning sex education as it has been handled through the years. Although some of the aspects were considered quite old fashioned by Maw, they are still being used far too widely today.

Silence was described as an old-fashioned theory prevalent long ago but signs of it are still with us today.

Moral suasion was a type of instruction that linked sex with sin. This was prominent during the 1890's. Much harm was done because of the immense amount of literature concerning the sin involved in sex.

Fear was introduced as a guideline in sexual instruction. The point most often emphasized was fear after death but other areas such as venereal infection, illegitimacy, insanity, sterility and social ostracism were given considerable mention.

During the twentieth century, many authorities felt that children needed more facts. Therefore facts

were emphasized in the realm of sex instruction, with little emphasis to understanding. Many youngsters were terrified by the factual knowledge and simply could not adapt it to their lives.

Due to the incompetence of factual information with little stress on understanding, authorities attempted to resolve the issue by de-emphasizing biological facts. Stress was then placed on the development of attitudes and concern for the human race. The main criticism here was that this approach, which denied the study of anatomy, was as harmful as over-emphasizing it.

Personal development was described as the problem-solving approach used in educational problems today. This method was geared more to the individual through special help such as guidance people and teachers. Programs were developed through cooperation of the Parent Teacher Association, schools, and other community organizations.

Family relationships and responsibilities was another approach emphasized. Programs of sex education were based upon personal development fused with those emphasizing socialization activities.¹

¹Wallace H. Maw, "Your School and Sex Education," Education, LXXXIII (January, 1963), 198-301.

In conclusion Maw stated:

In practice, many curricula are eclectic, employing something from all the ideas. The more effective programs, however, are less restricted to the ideas of silence, sermons, threats, and fact and increasingly focused upon the teaching of ethical understanding, personal development, and human relations.¹

Kirkendall gave six approaches to sex education and pointed out some of the strong and weak points within them.

The use of an outside lecturer, not directly associated with the schools was described as too short and shallow in scope. The approach also shifts the responsibility for this phase of education directly on the school authorities.

An approach described as a separate unit in sex education, in some course at the junior or senior high school level, isolated the subject matter too much. It was felt that it should be taught in the context of problems of adjustment.

The provision of films and reading materials without accompanying instruction was described as valuable approach but of a more supplementary nature than a more complete program needed for this type of program.

Individual instruction and counseling was the fourth approach given. The problem involved here was

¹Ibid., p. 301.

that this approach was far too time consuming and too few students could be instructed.

The integration of sex instruction into the current courses and offerings was described as the most ideal situation but also had some limiting factors. A full curriculum and inadequate teacher preparedness were given as prime limiting factors.

The last approach was the installation of a single course of broad scope, emphasizing personal adjustment or preparation for marriage and family life, in which emphasis was laid upon sex understanding.¹

The approach accepted as most desirable in this discussion is the development of functional courses in personal adjustment and in preparation for marriage and family life. This approach utilizes as a subsidiary method the integration of supporting materials whenever possible into the various subjects of the curriculum.²

Nine basic principles of sex education were outlined by Kirkendall. They are summarized below:

1. The program must give consideration to the psychological, social, personal, health, and biological aspects of sex.
2. An objective, unemotional, yet moral approach to sex education is desirable.³

¹Lester A. Kirkendall, Sex Education as Human Relations (New York: Inner Publishing Company, Inc., 1950), pp. 149-161.

²Ibid., p. 161.

³Ibid., p. 62.

3. Sex should be recognized as a normal, natural phase of life which can make valuable contributions to wholesome living.

Too much sex education has been based wholly on the "protection" principle. Young people are taught to avoid venereal infection, unwanted pregnancies, and sex delinquency. According to this view, if these dangers could be eliminated, sex education would be needless. People who feel this way have never grasped the normality or dignity of sex.¹

4. Sex education should be a continuous process throughout life instead of a lecture or a film at a certain point in the person's life.
5. Full and complete information should be given to children and youth with special precaution taken to make it suitable for their level of development.
6. Any instructor who gives sex instruction must have settled his own problems to the extent that his instruction was not a compensation for his own uncertainties.
7. Condemnation, censure, and punishment are ineffective ways to control conduct. "The importance of frank, open discussion as a method of influencing conduct has been stressed. But censure and condemnation as forms of control have always proved ineffective."²

¹Ibid., p. 63.

²Ibid., p. 64.

8. An objective interest in this field by youth should be regarded as indicating a potential or actual good adjustment rather than a maladjustment.

An interest in sex is sometimes regarded as evidence of a morbid concern. People should be interested--although not in a morbid nor obsessed way--in so vital an aspect of life as sex. Most people are, but social custom has caused them to repress their interest. An open, objective manifestation of interest is evidence that the individual has overcome the pressure of inhibitions, and is a safeguard against maladjustment.¹

9. Instruction should progress toward the consideration of an increasingly wide range of topics in mixed groups.

Because of their previous home and school experience the first problem may be to build proper attitudes and accustom the pupils to discussions on sex matters in single sex groups before discussion of a more direct nature is attempted in mixed groups.²

The authorities previously reviewed have been concerned with basic principles of sex education, the various approaches to sex education, and the theories involved in such a program.

IV. SEX EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Two authorities have suggested that the elementary school should hold a position of the utmost importance

¹Ibid., p. 65.

²Ibid., p. 66.

in a program of sex education. Their opinions and objectives of such a program are reported here.

Gruenberg stated, "School should teach whatever is important, whenever the occasion demands, from the lowest grades to the highest."¹ A program in the elementary grades provided an atmosphere of boys and girls working and playing together in a setting that avoided embarrassments. They learned to regard one another as persons and, therefore, accepted differences within their own sex group and in the opposite sex group.

He concluded, "Schools that begin in the lowest grades seem to find it much easier to deal with the supposedly difficult problems of later years, for the boys and girls are now less self-conscious."²

Kirkendall asserted that the elementary school in a rounded sex education program, would occupy a place of prime importance. He further stated:

During early childhood, attitudes are established and foundations laid for later adjustments. It is only during these years that already distorted attitudes, erroneous concepts, and facts were gained from clandestine sources.³

Kirkendall defined the elementary school's role with some important contributions that a sex education program should develop.

¹Gruenberg, op. cit., p. 48.

²Ibid.

³Kirkendall, op. cit., p. 229.

Social experiences should be provided for the elementary youngster to establish happy, harmonious adjustment between the sexes in work and play. If this were accomplished, the child could more easily make a good personal adjustment in his proper sex role. One of the main ideas was to bring boys and girls together in play and other social experiences to enhance good social adjustment.

Assistance by the school should be given to parents so that they could better help their own children. Study groups, the Parent Teachers Association and counseling would be methods to carry out this contribution. Good literature provided for the parents also would be needed to help the parents better understand their role in the program.

The teacher should be prepared to handle certain happenings in school, such as marks on walls, risque literature, undue curiosity, and suggestive speech. In a planned program, teachers would be cognizant of methods to handle such situations.

The school should help the child develop abilities and capacities in various fields of accomplishment. Idle time would be partially disposed of by these activities. The child who enjoys school and has developed skills in extra-curricular activities as well would not be as prone to become involved in random and erotic behaviorisms.

Information concerning the beginning of life, developments of plants, animals, and human beings, and their maturation and decline should be provided by the schools. The depth of study involved here would be determined by the individual school, community, and teacher. The upper grade students should be led to understandings concerning human beings, scientific vocabulary, correct terminology for parts of one's own body, and the study of actual problems of growing up.

The knowledge and understandings developed should be provided in the regular curriculum of the elementary schools. Therefore, no additional courses would need to be inserted, but rather the offering should be answered in the curriculum as it existed.¹

Manley suggested a set of objectives for a sex education program for the primary school (grades kindergarten through three) and for the intermediate grades (four through six). They are summarized here:

Objectives For a Primary Program

1. Wholesome attitudes. Wholesome attitudes, not only toward sex, but toward the school and individuals was the goal intended.
2. Proper terminology of the body. The primary grades are not responsible for all of the scientific

¹Kirkendall, op. cit., pp. 230-236.

terminology but for the terminology related specifically to their needs.

3. Sex differences between boys and girls. The growing-up factor would be considered here rather than scientific explanations.
4. A frank discussion of problems which concern them. The common, everyday problems should be brought out in an atmosphere conducive to learning.
5. Answers to questions related to reproduction. These questions should not be diverted and left to the imagination of the youngster. The child should be taught understandings which are meaningful to him at the time interest is shown.
6. Appreciation of family. The family should be projected in a wholesome way. Efforts are made to help the child understand his relationship in the family.

Objectives For an Intermediate Program

1. Wholesome attitudes. These attitudes should be strengthened all of the way through the elementary school.
2. Scientific vocabulary. Scientific terms are introduced for discussion of the natural processes.
3. Changes of the body discussed. The changes of the body which are taking place or will be taking

place should be brought to the front and discussed with the student. The information should be accurate and factual, and questions are considered a good stepping stone to more complete understanding.

4. Mature attitude. The atmosphere provided for in the school setting should allow the child to develop a mature attitude toward his own development and ultimately toward life adjustment.
5. Respect for social customs. Certain patterns in society should be evaluated at the child's level. This does not mean to inhibit the individuality of the student, but rather to develop understandings concerning social customs which should help the child live more fully and in understanding of those customs.
6. Understanding of growth, physiology, and inheritance. The child, at this point in his life shows great interest in this area. This inquisitiveness should be used to good advantage for the development of adequate knowledge and understandings.
7. Deepening of family loyalties. The school should emphasize the importance of the family and the relationships involved in the setting.

8. Respect for the miracle of life. Scientists are still theorizing how life has come about, and perhaps they always will. Even though the smallest growth particles may be identified, no one can explain just how the matter was set into motion to create human bodies and plants.¹

V. SEX EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The integrative approach was considered by several authorities. Some of the explanations of integration in relation to sex education in the curriculum and the reasons involved are considered here.

Kronhausen stated, "The conception of sex education not as an isolated subject, but as an integral part of the total curriculum should make this task easier for the schools and should make educators less vulnerable to outside criticism and attack."²

Manley reported that the objectives of a program of sex education in the schools are essentially the same as other areas of instruction. She further stated:

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education: Where, When and How Should it be Taught?" Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, XXXV (March, 1964), 21-24.

²Phyllis Eberhard Kronhausen, "Sex Education: Avoided More Than Neglected," The Education Digest, XXXVIII (March, 1963), 39.

Sex education is not a separate course and should never be isolated and cloud the minds of youngsters with a feeling of excitement and mysticism. It should be correlated and related to subjects already existent in the curriculum as health, biology, social studies, science, and personal and family living . . .¹

She cautioned, however, that the curriculum director or coordinator must be sure that this was being taught to all children at various age levels and not merely incidentally.²

Gruenberg answered theoretical critics who found it difficult to grasp the integrative view. He reported:

What! Would you talk about sex in every subject or lesson? The answer is two-fold. No, because sex education is mostly not talking about sex in the crude sense of "passion" or procreation. Yes,--or almost--because wherever education has to do with life, sex education is part of it.³

Further, in answer to theoretical critics who were concerned with just who in the schools would give instruction in sex education, Gruenberg stated:

You may be told that everybody in the school may take part, for nearly every "subject" and activity may contribute to better understanding of life, to the shaping of character, to the formation of ideals, to social adjustment.⁴

¹Helen Manley, "Sex Education in the Schools," School and Community, L (February, 1964), 13.

²Ibid.

³Gruenberg, op. cit., p. 49.

⁴Ibid.

Toward the accomplishment of achieving a sound sex education program, Kirkendall and Calderwood suggested the integrative approach. Emphasis should be placed on incorporating sex meaningfully into purposeful patterns of individual and social living. Kirkendall and Calderwood felt that until educators could administer the integrative approach, they would be unable to communicate with youth or give them help they needed.¹

Kirkendall reported that, twenty or thirty years ago, if any kind of sex education was given, it was almost certainly accomplished through a specialized approach. This approach consisted of a lecture by an itinerant authority or a medical doctor.

These procedures were described as isolated and unnatural in that there was practically no lead-up to the instruction nor any follow-up activities and discussion.

Kirkendall commented:

It is sufficient to say here that integration as a method of sex education has made far less progress than was originally hoped. It is an approach that needs more effort and attention.²

¹Lester A. Kirkendall and Deryck Calderwood, "Changing Sex Mores and Moral Instruction," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (October, 1964), 63-68.

²Kirkendall, op. cit., p. 111.

He concluded that the resolved approach would place sex instruction in the most natural setting as possible, that being a course already in the curriculum. "Then, rather than being set apart in the educational process, sex education needs to be related even more closely to thinking about total personal and social adjustment."¹

The authorities reviewed in this section have advocated the integration method of sex instruction.

VI. SEX EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN EXISTENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The elementary school sex education programs of the public schools of San Diego, California; Winnetka, Illinois; University City, Missouri; and Worthington, Ohio, are reviewed in this section. It was impossible, from the available research sources, to choose four or five prime factors and report on each of these. Not all of the sources listed the prime objectives nor did all of them tell of the lead-up approaches used in initiation of the program. However, care was taken to report on the most important aspects of the programs.

¹Ibid.

Wetherill reported extensively on the sex education program carried out by the San Diego Public Schools. The program was initiated approximately twenty-eight years ago.

The desirability of the community approach was quickly discovered in San Diego. The elements involved included the parents, Parent Teachers Association, study groups, churches, youth groups, social agencies, health departments, social hygiene associations and the schools.

Two years were spent preparing the community for sex education. Many key people were contacted and many speeches were given to community organizations. Among these probably the most responsive was the Parent Teachers Association.¹ Wetherill stated:

This was over twenty years ago when people didn't speak about sex as easily as they do now. It was revealing to find that people were anxious to overcome their prejudices and ignorance about sex. This experience was so enlightening to us and so buoyant that it spurred us on to the development of a school program that is said to be the most extensive and widely accepted school program ever developed.²

Wetherill, in another source, commented more specifically on the community approach. He commented:

¹G. G. Wetherill, "Who is Responsible for Sex Education?" The Journal of School Health, XXIX (December, 1959), 363.

²Ibid., p. 364.

So accepting responsibility in sex education came to be community-wide. But this didn't come about by accident. There was a feeling very early that if such a program were to become successful it would be necessary to make the right number of contacts in the right place. . . . For developing a program of this kind without bringing the community along in its thinking would be precarious.¹

Before the program was initiated questionnaires to measure community acceptance were sent to parents and high school students. Other methods of community orientation were lectures and discussions to parent groups and courses which were offered in the adult education department. The only disapproval which was encountered came from people who did not understand the purpose of a program of sex education.²

Wetherill, in a third article, directed comments toward the function of the elementary school aspect of the over-all program. The focal point of the elementary school program was offered in the sixth grade. This aspect was concerned with biology of reproduction plus only a few of the more basic concepts of Family Life Education. These areas were chosen because these areas

¹G. G. Wetherill, "Accepting Responsibility for Sex Education," The Journal of School Health, XXX (March, 1960), 108.

²Ibid.

are of the greatest interest for the student's stage of development.¹

The investigator reviewed a curriculum guide for sixth grade that included step-by-step methodology and procedures to be used by teachers.² A summary of the five lessons provided in the curriculum guide are given here.

Lesson One presented information on how boys and girls grow, names and functions of parts of the body, how girls and boys grow up differently, responsibilities of growing up, cautions with strangers and how to choose the right friends.

Lesson Two introduced reproduction with films on animal reproduction as an introduction to human reproduction. The films showed how a father cell and a mother egg come together to start a new life growing in the mother.

Lesson Three provided the story of human reproduction. Pamphlets were also available which were written for this age child.

¹G. G. Wetherill, "Sex Education in the Public Schools," The Journal of School Health, XXXI (September, 1961), 135.

²Vilas Lampe and Carl Gorham, Growing Up (San Diego Public Schools, 1965).

Lesson Four for boys included information on glandular changes, growth of sex organs, formation of sperm, seminal emissions, masturbation, reasons for body changes and the use of self control. The lesson for girls delved into matters concerning the sex organs, body changes, menstruation, sex relations and self control. It was pointed out here that some schools in the system felt the need to give information concerning menstruation in the fifth grade. The film, "The Story of Menstruation," was shown in those cases.

Lesson Five was built around the film, "Human Growth." Other aspects of the lesson included a review and clarification of previous lessons, strengthening the attitudes toward sex and growing up, developing correct terminology, and some of the boy-girl relationships which are of concern to the students.¹

Before the lessons are presented in the spring, the parents are invited to a meeting which was designed to explain them. The format of the program was explained and the films and film-strips reviewed. This provided the parents an opportunity to understand the nature of the lessons and to ask questions. Parents found the meetings an important aspect of the program and it helped

¹Ibid., pp. 4-80.

the school to realize its goal of supplementing the home in the area of sex education.¹

Although no statistics or formal evaluation of the program at San Diego were provided, Wetherill did stipulate that, "Parental acceptance in San Diego has been practically 100 per cent."²

Marland reported on the sex education program already existent in the Winnetka, Illinois, schools before he became the superintendent. Little information was provided as to how the program was initiated.

Grade five and seven are selected for special units of work in this area. The program was designed to treat the subject as an element of the science curriculum. At grade five the subject was handled by the regular classroom teachers and by the science faculty in the departmentalized junior high school.

The grade five content was projected as a low-keyed and fairly scientific element of physiology. The reproductive system was treated along with the circulatory, respiratory, digestive and other systems of the human body. The use of animals in the elementary schools

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Wetherill, op. cit., p. 236.

at the fifth grade level gave reality to the parallels with human mating, pregnancy, birth, nursing, and care of the off-spring.

Boys and girls are not separated at grade five for this instruction. Teachers and students alike found this provided experiences which were quite meaningful and beneficial.

Four rather broad objectives for grade five were provided in the literature. They are summarized here: To

1. Provide sex education in a setting of human growth and development.
2. Promote scientific attitudes of study, satisfying curiosity about children's health and growth.
3. Develop mature attitudes concerning sex development.
4. Provide for the normal fifth grader's needs concerning sexual anatomy, birth, and health sex attitudes.¹

Parents are clearly informed about the instruction presented to the students of both the fifth and seventh grades. Parental acceptance of the program was very high according to the literature. Marland stated:

¹S. P. Marland, "Placing Sex Education in the Curriculum--The Winnetka Experience," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (October, 1964), 132-134.

In Winnetka the instruction is taken so completely for granted that we would have great resistance from parents if we should choose to discontinue the offering.¹

Guest provided information concerning a program entitled "Growth and Reproduction" which was initiated in the Worthington, Ohio, schools. The program was developed in 1964 and extends from kindergarten through grade twelve. The approach was described as developmental, related to pupil interests, and in the context of science and health. Sex education was considered in its broadest aspect, and presented in a human relation setting.²

Guest included another brief description of the "Family Health Education" program in the schools at University City, Missouri. The school system, with 8,300 pupils in the eleven elementary schools, two junior high and one senior high, was labeled a pioneer in the area of sex education. An outline of the sixth grade program was provided:

- I. Cells, tissues, organs and systems
- II. Particular emphasis on the functions of the various systems: circulatory, digestive, skeletal, muscular, respiratory, nervous, glandular, lymphatic, excretory

¹Ibid., p. 134.

²H. H. Guest, "A Report on Sex Education," (Unpublished report to the Board of Education, Winnipeg School Division #1), p. 28.

- III. Reproductive education
 - A. Sex cells--how they differ from body cells; source
 - B. Physiology of male and female reproductive systems
 - C. Development of a baby from the moment of conception until birth
- IV. Responsibilities of parents to children
- V. Growing up: physical changes; changes in feelings (growth differences associated)

The material was taught by the regular teachers in mixed classroom groups, except for a section on menstruation given to girls only, by a woman teacher or nurse. The Health Coordinator for the school system visited each sixth grade class for three to four hours to give a culminative unit.¹

In this section sex education programs in four elementary school systems were described in varying detail. The areas of program planning, the community approach, objectives, and skeleton units were reviewed.

The review of literature in Chapter II served as a guide in formulating the self-constructed questionnaire used for gathering data in this field report. Questions for the questionnaire section on Family Life Education were drawn from the authoratative opinions of Manley² and Kirkendall.³

¹Ibid., p. 29.

²Manley, loc. cit.

³Kirkendall, loc. cit.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES USED

As was stated in Chapter I the purpose of this field report was to determine parental opinion concerning various phases of Family Life Education. Methods and procedures which were used are reported in this section.

I. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire which was designed to serve as the instrument to measure parental opinion was entitled, "Questionnaire: Family Life Education." The three main sections of the instrument were: (1) Family Information; (2) Family Life Education; and (3) Sex Education. The instrument was designed as a two-page questionnaire with a small amount of room at the bottom and the back side for further statements by the parents. The questionnaire was validated by presentation to Professors Hazel Weakly and Carl Fehrle, Drake University. The questionnaire in its entirety is reported in the Appendix.

A one-page letter explaining the purpose of the survey was included with the questionnaire. The letter can also be located in the Appendix.

Permission and approval to conduct the survey was obtained from the School Administration, Mason City, Iowa.

Each correspondence with the parents included:
(1) the questionnaire; (2) a letter of explanation; and
(3) a stamped return envelope.

II. THE SCHOOL SURVEY

The questionnaire and the letter were sent to a random sampling of parents of children in grades three, six, and nine in the following Mason City, Iowa, Schools: Lincoln, Grant, Wilson, Jefferson Elementary and Monroe Junior High. A listing of the students in these grades, along with the parents' names and address, was secured from school principals. Eighteen per cent of the names from each class list were drawn randomly from a box. Care was taken not to send more than one questionnaire to each of the families. This survey did not include any parochial or private schools.

Five different issues of stamps were purchased from the Post Office. Each school was designated with an individual issue of stamp, so that, when the questionnaires were returned, the school family could be easily determined. These stamps were placed on the envelopes, which were to be used by the parents to return the questionnaires.

III. THE RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE

A tabulation sheet was designed to transfer the information on the answered questionnaires. There was a space provided on the tabulation sheet for each of the questions asked. Many of the comments by the parents were too lengthy to write on the tabulation sheet so the questionnaires were retained. The comments by the parents were reviewed later and are found in Chapter IV.

IV. ASSIMILATION OF THE DATA

The tabulation sheets were computed and the various aspects of parental opinion were weighed. The method by which the questions were computed and results obtained are provided in the item analysis in Chapter IV.

V. PROCEDURES OF REPORTING THE STUDY

An item analysis was chosen as the best method to show the results of the study. The three main headings followed the format of the questionnaire. They are: (1) Family Information; (2) Family Life Education; and (3) Sex Education. The comments by the parents are analyzed in the last part of the chapter.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

A total of ninety-eight questionnaires was sent to the parents in the Mason City community. The total number of returned questionnaires was sixty-seven, constituting a percentage of 68.2. The percentages of the returned questionnaires of the four elementary schools were as follows: (1) Wilson--90 per cent; (2) Lincoln--65 per cent; (3) Grant--85 per cent; and (4) Jefferson--53 per cent. Of the questionnaires sent to the Monroe Junior High parents 73 per cent were returned.

I. FAMILY INFORMATION

There were 129 boys and 107 girls in the families returning the questionnaires. The total number of boys and girls was 236.

The average age of the subjects' mothers was 38.5 years of age, and the average age of the fathers was 41.5 years of age.

It was revealed that 69.2 per cent of the mothers and 75 per cent of the fathers did not receive information pertaining to matters of sex as a child.

Questionnaires were returned from fifty-four Protestant families, twelve Catholic families, and one Jewish family.

II. FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

This section of the questionnaire contained two questions related to Family Life Education. The first question involved a checklist of various aspects of Family Life Education. Parents were asked to rate items 1 to 5--the most important being number one.

Since the question asked for a rating of one through five, it was necessary in the final tabulation to give each of the ratings a certain point value. The static weights were provided as follows: (1) first choice equalled five points; (2) second choice equalled four points; (3) third choice equalled three points; (4) fourth choice equalled two points; and (5) fifth choice equalled one point.

Since each questionnaire was represented on the Tabulation Sheet, each choice was given its proper weight and then totaled. This was done for each school on separate sheets. The total number of points for each question was then divided by the number of responses to the question. In some cases this response number would vary, as a few of the questionnaires were not answered in their entirety.

Table I shows that parents considered the most important phases of Family Life Education to be, in order, Parent-Child Relations, Understanding Emotions, Sex

Education, and Personal Counseling. Parents felt the least important phases to be, in order, Narcotics, Preparation for Marriage, Dating, and Alcohol and Tobacco.

TABLE I

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE
OF VARIOUS PHASES OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION
IN MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	A**	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Wilson	3.56*	.56	.56	3.22	.67	3.33	3.44	.56
Lincoln	2.00	.60	.80	3.30	.90	2.50	3.90	1.00
Grant	3.00	1.40	.30	3.40	.80	2.00	3.40	1.10
Jefferson	1.80	.73	.67	3.00	.87	4.13	3.33	.47
Jr. High	2.28	1.33	.50	2.56	1.11	3.61	2.89	.89
TOTAL AVERAGE	2.53	.92	.57	3.10	.87	3.11	3.39	.80

NOTE: *Numerals denote weight value on 0-5 scale.
**Letters A-H designate respectively: Personal Counseling, Alcohol and Tobacco, Narcotics, Sex Education, Dating, Understanding Emotions, Parent-Child Relations, and Preparation for Marriage.

The second question under Family Life Education also involved a checklist. The first three choices, as indicated in the questionnaire, were tabulated by the investigator. The first choice on this question was given a weight of five (5) points; the second choice was given a weight of three (3) points; and the third choice was

given a weight of one (1) point. These weights were then added and averaged by dividing by the number of responses from each school. Table II shows the results of the analysis of the five schools.

The parental ranking of the community resources from most harmful to least harmful was (1) Movies; (2) Downtown recreation (existing); (3) Television; (4) Paperbacks; (5) Magazines; (6) Dancing; (7) Downtown recreation (lack of); and (8) Other.

The fact that movies were given a weight total of 2.77 indicates that this phase of downtown recreation was considered much more harmful than other activities.

TABLE II

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION CONCERNING THE HARMFULNESS OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL RESOURCES TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES IN MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	A**	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Wilson	3.33*	.89	1.67	1.11	.33	.00	1.56	.00
Lincoln	2.91	2.36	.82	.27	.64	.55	1.00	.45
Grant	2.40	1.10	1.70	2.20	.70	.00	.90	.00
Jefferson	2.64	1.53	.29	1.53	.18	.35	1.76	.65
Jr. High	2.59	1.35	.59	1.29	.06	.41	2.71	.00
AVERAGE	2.77	1.45	1.01	1.28	.38	.26	1.59	.22

NOTE: *Numerals denote weight value by first choice--5 points; second choice--3 points; and third choice--1 point.

**Letters A-H designate respectively: Movies, Television, Magazines, Paperbacks, Dancing, Downtown Recreation (existing), Downtown Recreation (lack of), and Other.

III. SEX EDUCATION

The section of the questionnaire entitled Sex Education was the third and last section of the questionnaire. There were eight questions in this section and each was analyzed and presented here.

Table III shows the results of the question regarding parents' attitudes as to whether the schools should help with sex education. A total of 97.70 per cent of the parents favored sex education in the school curriculum.

TABLE III

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION CONCERNING WHETHER SCHOOLS
SHOULD HELP IN SEX EDUCATION INSTRUCTION,
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	Yes	No	Total	Per Cent Yes	Per Cent No
Wilson	9	0	9	100	00
Lincoln	11	0	11	100	00
Grant	11	0	11	100	00
Jefferson	15	1	16	93.75	6.25
Jr. High	18	1	19	94.74	5.26
TOTAL	64	2	66	97.70	2.30

In response to the question concerning resource use, parents used books and pamphlets to a much greater

degree than any other resource in helping their children in sex education.

Table IV shows that parents regarded themselves generally as adequate in sex education of their children. A total of 71.57 per cent indicated a feeling of adequacy.

TABLE IV
SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION CONCERNING THEIR ADEQUACY
IN PROVIDING SEX EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN,
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	(Adequate) Yes	Per Cent	(Not Adequate) No	Per Cent
Wilson	6	66.67	3	33.33
Lincoln	6	54.55	5	45.45
Grant	9	81.82	2	18.18
Jefferson	12	70.60	5	29.40
Jr. High	16	84.20	3	15.80
TOTAL	49	71.57	18	28.43

The reaction of the parents as to what grade level various aspects of Family Life Education should be taught is shown in Table V. In some cases parents reported a large scope of rating in the answer. For example, some questionnaires showed four, five, and six as the grade level indication. In all cases the investigator used a median point as the response to be tabulated. Several chronological age responses were converted to the normal grade placement for that age.

TABLE V

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION CONCERNING GRADE PLACEMENT
OF FOUR ASPECTS OF SEX EDUCATION,
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	A**	B	C	D
Wilson	4.9*	5.7	4.6	8.1
Lincoln	3.3	4.5	3.9	5.6
Grant	4.8	5.3	4.4	5.9
Jefferson	4.9	5.6	4.9	7.0
Jr. High	4.7	5.3	5.6	7.1
TOTAL AVERAGE	4.5	5.3	4.7	6.7

NOTE: *Numerals denote grade level.

**Letters A-D designate respectively: Information concerning menstruation for girls, Information concerning puberty for boys, Information concerning human reproduction (girls and boys), and Information concerning morality and sexual behavior.

In general, parents felt that information concerning menstruation for girls should be given the latter part of fourth grade, as indicated by the grade placement average of 4.5 in Table V. Information concerning puberty for boys should be presented in the first part of fifth grade, as indicated by the grade placement average of 5.3 in Table V. Parents felt that information concerning human reproduction for boys and girls should be given the latter part of fourth grade, as indicated by the grade placement average of 4.7 in Table V. Information concerning morality

and sexual behavior should be presented during the last half of grade six, as indicated by the grade placement average of 6.7 in Table V.

Table VI shows that 93.46 per cent of the parents felt it would be a good idea for them to hear lectures and see films on sex education.

TABLE VI

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION TOWARD OBSERVING RESOURCES
OF A SEX EDUCATION PROGRAM IN MASON CITY, IOWA,
MAY, 1968

School	Yes	Per Cent	No	Per Cent
Wilson	9	100.	0	00.
Lincoln	10	90.91	1	9.09
Grant	9	81.82	2	18.18
Jefferson	17	100.	0	00.
Jr. High	18	94.74	1	5.26
TOTAL AND AVERAGE	63	93.49	4	6.51

Table VII shows that 82.56 per cent of the parents would like to see more emphasis placed on the opportunity for hearing lectures and seeing films shown to students in Family Life Education.

TABLE VII

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION TOWARD OBSERVING ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES OF A SEX EDUCATION PROGRAM
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	Yes	Per Cent	No	Per Cent
Wilson	8	88.89	1	11.11
Lincoln	10	90.91	1	9.09
Grant	8	72.73	3	27.27
Jefferson	13	76.48	4	23.52
Jr. High	16	84.22	3	15.78
TOTAL AND AVERAGE	55	82.65	12	17.35

In regard to the parental opinion about the present Family Life Education program in existence in Mason City, Table VIII shows that 55.2 per cent of the parents surveyed were satisfied, and 44.8 per cent of the parents surveyed were not satisfied.

According to Table IX, 66.28 per cent of the parents indicated an interest in an Adult Education course designed to give aid to parents in helping their children in sex education.

TABLE VIII

SELECTED PARENTAL OPINION TOWARD SATISFACTION
WITH THE FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	Yes (Satisfied)	Per Cent	No (Not Satisfied)	Per Cent
Wilson	3	33.3	6	66.7
Lincoln	7	63.6	4	36.4
Grant	7	63.6	4	36.4
Jefferson	8	47.0	9	53.0
Jr. High	13	68.4	6	31.6
TOTAL AND AVERAGE	38	55.2	29	44.8

TABLE IX

SELECTED PARENTAL CONSIDERATION OF ENROLLING IN AN
ADULT EDUCATION CLASS CONCERNING SEX EDUCATION
MASON CITY, IOWA, MAY, 1968

School	Yes (Interested)	Per Cent	No (Not Interested)	Per Cent
Wilson	7	77.8	2	22.2
Lincoln	9	81.8	2	18.2
Grant	6	54.5	5	45.5
Jefferson	11	64.7	6	35.3
Jr. High	10	52.6	9	47.4
TOTAL AND AVERAGE	43	66.28	24	33.72

IV. PARENTAL COMMENTS

The concluding section of the questionnaire was devoted to comments on improving a program in Family Life Education. The following comments were offered, and, in some cases, were not relevant to the question.

In this modern space age, I believe it is very important for our children to receive the right opinions and ideas about sex education. When this instruction is given in the schools, they learn the information in the proper perspective.

I feel that we should be sure in our school system that each and every child should know about the facts of life. Some parents are afraid to talk about sex, or they have old-fashioned ideas. Therefore, the children get into trouble because they only know half the facts.

Since we parents aren't doing a good job of sex instruction at home, we shouldn't have control of the school's program. I am interested in seeing what is being done in this field but do not want the parents to veto or have veto powers over the program.

I think the parents should be educated before the children so when they are faced with a question it can be answered correctly.

I believe Family Life Education is a very important issue, and I know as a mother I have trouble trying to express what I really want and feel my children should know concerning sex.

What is the Family Life program? Where do we find out about it? I have held offices in Parent's Teachers Association for six years and I have not heard about it or seen an outline of the program. What is it's goal? If it is to curb teenage pregnancies, I think it should include more than just biological instruction. There should also be included in the program a campaign against the trend toward immorality in society today.

I am not aware of a specific program in Family Life Education.

I agree that the main source of family life education should come from the home. However, I feel the school can greatly aid the parents. I feel that the best way is through audio-visual aids.

Hopefully, the program will grow!

I do believe the schools could do more for the children who do not have a good relationship with their parents at home.

We believe wholeheartedly that the home should be the prime source of sex education for children.

I doubt that parents alone can give wide enough scope to adequately prepare their child in sex education. Morality and social desired standards are not necessarily sex education.

Parents should be given the opportunity to hear lectures and see films with their children. This would be a great benefit to both.

The only contacts so far, that I have had with Family Life Education are a movie on menstruation for my sixth grade daughter and a movie on puberty for my thirteen-year-old son. Like any program, any improvement adds to the success and interest of it.

Together the church and school can work well. The school provides the factual information and the church provides the moral responsibility.

The aim and approach seem right, but at this stage the results are impossible to judge. From what seems to have rubbed off on our kids, which may mean that the approach is sensible since they haven't been impressed with the items they have had as anything "special."

Education in Family Life should be frank, honest, and to the point.

My experience has been that the school is not up to this kind of job. Trained personnel can sometimes be beneficial. The schools can be a liaison or help in directing or channeling information on sex.

I personally can't begin to see how a child could be harmed by learning about sex in the classroom rather than at home. To learn it in the classroom is certainly better than not learning it at all.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was (1) to review literature in the field of sex education which outlined the current thinking and obligations of the schools; (2) to determine some of the opinions held by parents in Mason City, concerning Family Life Education in the public school curriculum; and (3) to assimilate the data gathered in the survey to help further Family Life Education in this Community.

A self-constructed questionnaire was designed to measure parental opinion on Family Life Education using information from selected readings. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: (1) Family Information; (2) Family Life Education; and (3) Sex Education. These sections contained from two to seven questions, with space for additional comments from parents. The questionnaire was validated by presentation to Professors Hazel Weakly and Carl Fehrle, Drake University.

Five schools were involved in the study; four elementary and one junior high. The Lincoln, Grant, Wilson, Jefferson Elementary Schools, and the Monroe Junior High School were thought to represent a cross

section of the Mason City School population. A list of parents was obtained from school principals and eighteen per cent random sampling was used.

A total of ninety-eight questionnaires, with an accompanying letter and self-addressed envelope, was sent to selected parents of children in grades, three, six, and nine. A total of sixty-seven questionnaires was returned, constituting a return of 68.2 per cent. The questionnaires were analyzed and data presented.

Chapter IV presented the following findings from the selected parents surveyed:

1. The number of parents in favor of including sex education in the school curriculum was 97.70 per cent.
2. The per cent of mothers that did not receive sex information as a child was 69.2.
3. The per cent of fathers that did not receive sex education as a child was 75.
4. Parent-child relations was designated as the most important phase of Family Life Education.
5. Movies were recognized as the most harmful community recreational facility.
6. Parents indicated that books and pamphlets aided them the most in helping their children in sex education.

7. Parents generally felt they were doing an adequate job in the sex education of their children.
8. The following areas of Family Life Education should receive emphasis between fourth and sixth grade: menstruation, puberty, human reproduction, and morality and sexual behavior.
9. The per cent of parents in favor of hearing lectures and seeing films that will be shown to the students was 93.46.
10. In regard to more emphasis placed on the opportunity of seeing more audio-visual aids, 82.65 per cent of the parents responded favorably.
11. The number of parents satisfied with the present Family Life program in Mason City was 55.2 per cent.
12. Parents designating an interest in an Adult Education course, designed to give aid to them in helping their children in sex education, was 66.28 per cent.

II. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the study the following conclusions were made:

1. A high percentage of parents indicated the school should help with Family Life Education.

2. Of the number of parents surveyed, slightly more than half were satisfied with the present Family Life Education Program in the Mason City Schools.
3. Parents desire the opportunity to view all resource materials which are used in a program of Family Life Education.
4. Opinions of authorities in the field of sex education agree that various aspects of sex education should be integrated as much as possible into the existing curriculum.

III. RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the study the following recommendation is made:

1. Since 44.8 per cent of the parents indicated some dissatisfaction with the Family Life Education Program in the Mason City Schools, this field report should be presented to the School Administration and other interested groups for study in regard to possible curriculum revision.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Baruch, Dorothy Walter, Ph.D. New Ways in Sex Education. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959.
- Hinricks, Marie, and Robert Kaplan. The Home, The School and Education. Chicago: American Medical Association, 1966.
- Johnson, Warren R., and Julia Ann Johnson. Human Sex and Sex Education. Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1963.
- Kirkendall, Lester A. Sex Education as Human Relations. New York: Iner Publishing Company, Inc., 1950.
- Macandrew, Rennie. Rennie Macandrew on Sex Education. London: The Wales Publishing Company, 1954.
- McHese, Elizabeth, Ed. D. Family Life Education in School and Community. New York: Bureau of Publications-Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.
- Strain, Frances Bruce, and Chester Lee Eggert. Framework for Family Life Education. The American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 1956.
- Swift, Edith Hale, M.D. Step by Step in Sex Education. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1955.

B. PERIODICALS

- Alden, Carl B., M.D., and Jane Blanchard. "Experience in Giving a Course in Sex Education," Journal of School Health, XXXII (April, 1962), 127-132.
- Avery, Curtiss E. "Sex Education Through Rose-Colored Glasses," Education Digest, XXX (December, 1964), 9-12.
- Calderone, Mary S., M.D. "Adolescent Sexual Behavior: Whose Responsibility?" The PTA Magazine, LIX (September, 1964), 4-7.
- _____. "Sexual Behavior--Whose Responsibility?" Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (October, 1964), 69.

Friggens, Paul. "Shameful Neglect of Sex Education," The Parent Teacher Association Magazine, LXI (May, 1967), 4-8.

Gruenberg, Benjamin C. "What is Being Done?" Education Digest, XX (May, 1955), 48-51.

Hayman, Howard S., Ed.D. "Impressions of Sex Education in Sweden," Journal of School Health, XXXIV (May, 1964), 209-217.

Holzman, Seymour. "Sex Education is Here to Stay," The Scholastic Teacher, (February, 1968), 4.

Johnson, Warren R., and Margaret Schutt. "Sex Education Attitudes of School Administrators and School Board Members," The Journal of School Health, XXXVI (February, 1966), 64-68.

Kilander, Frederick H., Ph.D. "A Survey of the Public's Knowledge of Certain Aspects of Human Reproduction," Journal of School Health, XXXIX (June, 1959), 211-215.

_____. "Sex Education for Adults," School and Society, LXXXVI (June, 1958), 297.

Kronhausen, Phillis Eberhard. "Sex Education: Avoided More Than Neglected," The Education Digest, XXVIII (March, 1963), 38-41.

Lampe, Viola, and Carl Gorham. "Growing Up," Social Health Education Guide, San Diego Public Schools, San Diego, California, 1965.

Manley, Helen. "Sex Education: Where, When, and How Should it be Taught?" Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, XXXV (March, 1964), 22-24.

_____. "Sex Education in the Schools," School and Community, L (February, 1964), 12, 25-27.

Marland, S. P. "Placing Sex Education in the Curriculum--The Winnetka Experience," Phi Delta Kappan, XLIII (December, 1961), 132-134.

Maw, Wallace H. "Your School and Sex Education," Education, LXXXIII (January, 1963), 198-301.

Barick, C. Lawrence, and Karl G. Staedefalke. "Sex Education," Review of Educational Research, XXVI (December, 1956), 546-547.

Speirs, N. Rae. "Sex Education: Beyond the Biological," The Education Digest, XXXI (November, 1965), 22-24.

Stone, Donald B., M.S. "A Basic Philosophy of Sex Education," Journal of School Health, XXVII (June, 1958), 237-240.

Suehsdorf, Adie. "What Have We Learned About Sex Education?" Child Study, XXXII (Winter, 1954-1955), 2-3.

Wagner, Guy. "What Schools Are Doing: Teaching Family Living," Education, LXXXIV (October, 1963), 124-125.

Wetherill, G. G., M.D. "Accepting Responsibility for Sex Education," Journal of School Health, XXX (March, 1960), 107-110.

_____. "Sex Education in the Public Schools," Journal of School Health, XXXI (September, 1961), 235-239.

_____. "Who is Responsible for Sex Education?" Journal of School Health, XXIX (December, 1959), 361-364.

C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Edwards, Marcia, Associate Dean. Unpublished Letter, University of Minnesota, April 6, 1968.

Guest, H. H. "A Report on Sex Education." Unpublished report to the Board of Education, The Winnipeg School Division #1, 1-45.

APPENDIX

May 15, 1968

Dear Parent,

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study which I am completing in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science degree in Elementary Curriculum at Drake University. The study is attempting to determine opinions of parents of children in grades (3), (6), and (9) concerning Family Life Education in the public school curriculum. In addition, the results of the survey may determine for your school which aspects of Family Life Education are being met and which aspects are not being met.

I would appreciate very much your taking a few minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire and return it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope which is also enclosed. Please be as frank as possible when answering the questions. Your answers will be confidential. Do not write your name on the questionnaire or on the envelope.

If you would like to have the results of the study, I will be happy to send them to you upon request. I would appreciate having the completed questionnaire no later than May 31, 1968.

Thank you very much. Your cooperation in completing this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Phyllis Oetken
Lincoln School

QUESTIONNAIRE: FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

A. FAMILY INFORMATION

- | | Age | Grade | Age | Grade |
|--|------------|----------|-------|-------|
| 1. How many boys are in your family? ____ | (| ____ | , | ____ |
| | ____ | ____ | , | ____ |
| 2. How many girls are in your family? ____ | (| ____ | , | ____ |
| | ____ | ____ | , | ____ |
| 3. Age of the mother? ____ Age of the father? ____ | | | | |
| 4. Did you as a child receive adequate information pertaining to matters relating to sex? (Answer Yes or No) | | | | |
| | ____ | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| | Mother | Father | Other | |
| 5. What is your family's religious affiliation? | | | | |
| | ____ | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| | Protestant | Catholic | | |
| | ____ | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| | Jewish | Other | | |

B. FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

1. One of the most important goals of a program in Family Life Education is to provide a curriculum which will give aids to the many problems of growing up. Below is a checklist of various aspects of Family Life Education. Would you rate them in order of the importance or emphasis that you feel they should receive in the schools. Rate them 1 to 5 -- the most important being 1, (2, 3, 4,) and 5 being of lesser importance. Omit the remaining blanks.
 - a. ____ Personal Counseling
 - b. ____ Alcohol and tobacco
 - c. ____ Narcotics
 - d. ____ Sex Education
 - e. ____ Dating
 - f. ____ Understanding emotions
 - g. ____ Parent-child relations
 - h. ____ Preparation for marriage

2. Social attitudes of children are affected by various aspects of the home, school, and community. Of the community entertainment or recreational facilities listed below, which do you feel are the most harmful in the development of social attitudes? Please rate them 1-most harmful, 2 to 3-least harmful.
- a. ☐ Movies
 - b. ☐ Television
 - c. ☐ Magazines
 - d. ☐ Paperbacks
 - e. ☐ Dancing
 - f. ☐ Downtown recreation (existing)
 - g. ☐ Downtown recreation (lack of)
 - h. ☐ Other (please list) _____

C. SEX EDUCATION

1. Authorities agree that the home should be the prime source of sex education for children. Schools in the nation are in agreement with this philosophy. In some communities the schools have been asked to help establish avenues of communication between parents and children so that the home can better carry out its duty. These communities look to the schools for help because of close contact with the youth and the availability of facilities such as audio visual aids and trained personnel. Do you as parents feel that the schools should help in this way? ☐ Yes; ☐ No
2. From the sources listed below list in order of importance or helpfulness toward helping you in giving your child information concerning matters related to sex. Please list 1-Most Beneficial; 2- 3-Least Beneficial.
 - a. ☐ Church
 - b. ☐ Doctor
 - c. ☐ School
 - d. ☐ Literature (books, pamphlets, etc.)
 - e. ☐ P. T. A.
 - f. ☐ Other resources - please list _____
3. Do you feel that you as parents are adequately carrying out your job in preparing your child in sex education? ☐ Yes; ☐ No

